

Hey everybody, Pastor Stephen Anderson here from Faithful Word Baptist Church in Tempe, Arizona in the United States of America with a very important message for you - but first let me ask you a question - if you were to die today do you know for sure that you would go to heaven?

Well the Bible tells us that we can be 100 percent sure in the next few moments - I'm going to give you God willing that assurance. First of all in Romans 3 23 the Bible says for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. Every single person has sinned that's pretty easy to understand the Bible even says the thought of foolishness is sin so even just thinking something stupid is a sin. The bible says to him that knoweth to do good and doeth it not to him it is sin so even just not doing something good is a sin - so we've all sinned, and truth be told we probably all sin every day because none of us is perfect - As it is written there is none righteous, no not one.

Well the Bible tells us that there's a punishment for our sin in Romans 6 23 it says "for the wages of sin is death" but not only that - when we go to the end of the bible in the book of Revelation it talks about the second death it says "And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire : this is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire." And of course the lake of fire is what we would commonly refer to as hell - a place where people will be punished for their sins for all eternity - a place of fire and brimstone, a horrible place of punishment. Well in chapter 21 of Revelation, it has a list of who's going to hell – it says "But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death." So it mentions some pretty bad sins - like murderers and sorcerers, but then it says all liars shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone which is the second death and of course we've all lied so again we've all sinned - we all come short and we all deserve to go to hell because even all liars the Bible says are going to hell. We've all lied before but the good news is that in spite of that God loves us and so of course God does not want us to go to hell - but of course He wasn't kidding when He said that those people would have their part in the lake of fire so He did something to save us.

The Bible says "But God commendeth his love toward us in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." So we're all sinners we all deserve to go to hell - but then the Bible tells us that Jesus Christ died for us. Now what the bible means when it says that He died for us - it's basically saying that He took our punishment for us. So Jesus Christ the Son of God lived on this earth, He lived a perfect life, He was tempted in all points like as we are yet without sin. He did a lot of miracles, of course we know he walked on water, he healed the sick, he raised the dead, he turned the water into wine but he also preached the word of God. Well when you speak the truth a lot of people get angry - a lot of people get offended - so there were a lot of people who hated Jesus, so they ended up arresting Jesus, He was beaten, spat upon, whipped and ultimately He was nailed to the cross - and the bible says that when He was on that cross "He himself bore our sins in his own body on the tree". So every sin that I've ever done, and every sin that you've ever done, it was as if Jesus had done it - Jesus was taking the punishment for our sins. Well when he died on the cross, they took His body and they buried it in the tomb - His

soul went down to hell for three days and three nights and then three days later, He rose again from the dead. And He even showed the disciples the holes in his hands and the hole in his side to prove that he had literally bodily risen from the dead, now of course Jesus Christ died for every single person in the world - the Bible says he died not for our sins only, but also for the sins of the whole world, but is everyone automatically going to heaven? No, there's one thing that we must do to be saved- the Bible asks that question in Acts chapter 16 "What must i do to be saved - and they said: Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house."

Notice he didn't say : "go to church and you'll be saved", notice He didn't say "give money in the offering plate and you'll be saved", notice he didn't say "clean up your life and stop sinning and you'll be saved".

Those are all good things to do, but when it comes to being saved, the one thing that we must do to be saved is to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. John 3 :16 is the most famous verse in the whole bible – "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." - not whosoever is good enough, not whosoever cleans up their life, but whosoever believeth in him. Because the Bible says "For by grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves : it is the gift of God, not of works, lest any man should boast." So we're not saved by the works that we do, we're simply saved by believing in the Lord Jesus Christ, trusting in the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior - not trusting in our own works or our own deeds.

That's why the bible said that salvation is a gift - it says "For the wages of sin is death : but the gift of god is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord - now a gift is something that's free - it's something that you don't have to pay for - you don't have to work for - if you had to pay for it or work for it, it wouldn't be a gift. A gift is paid for by the giver and it's given out of love to the recipient. Jesus Christ paid for the gift of our salvation when he died on the cross for us. He paid for it with his own blood - all we have to do is just accept that free gift and we just receive that by believing in Jesus - by putting our faith and trust in Jesus. Now here's the most important part about this message : once we believe on Jesus Christ, He gives us eternal life.

The Bible says the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. Well, the word eternal means forever - so if God gives us a gift that lasts forever, how many times do we have to get it? Only once because it lasts forever. Jesus said I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.

So once we believe on Jesus Christ, we are saved forever - there's nothing we could ever do to lose our salvation, He promised I will never leave you, nor forsake you and nothing can separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Now, let's say you do something really bad after you believe on Jesus Christ, and let's just get kind of crazy and say that you were to do something as extreme as to commit murder.

Okay, well, obviously, if you commit murder, that's gonna make God angry and God's gonna punish you but that punishment will come in this lifetime. Okay we will reap what we sow in this life as Christians. The Bible says whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth and scourges every son whom he receiveth - so it's sort of like I have children, I actually have 11 children and if my children disobey my rules I'm going to discipline them, I'm going to punish them, but I'm not going to throw them out of the family, okay, I'm not going to say to them well that's it you're not my son anymore because you've broken my rules - it's the same thing with God.

The Bible says but as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name. So if you believe on the name of Jesus Christ, you are a son of God, you are a child of God, and just as I have rules for my kids, God has rules for his children. If you break God's rules, he'll discipline you in this life. Now if you commit a huge sin like murder, you're going to get a huge punishment - if you commit a huge sin like adultery, you're going to get a huge punishment. If you commit a smaller sin, you're going to get a smaller punishment. But you're going to be punished for your sins in this lifetime as a child of God - but you're still His son, He still loves you, he'll never leave you or forsake you, just as my children will always be my children - a child of God is always a child of God.

Once we're saved - we're always saved because we have everlasting life - look - I was never good enough to be saved in the first place. I can never be bad enough where he'll take it away from me because it's all by grace - so you only have to be saved one time.

Now just a quick review : we're all sinners, we all deserve to go to hell. Jesus Christ loves us, He died on the cross for us, He was buried and He rose again - that paid the price for our sins and He offers salvation freely to anyone who will just receive that free gift by believing in Jesus.

Look - if you think you're going to heaven because you're a good person, you're going to hell because you're not trusting Jesus you're trusting yourself

If you think you're going to heaven because you go to church and you live a good life and you stopped sinning and you've turned from your sins and all - look you're trusting in a works - based salvation you're trusting in yourself - You need to put all of your faith and trust in Jesus Christ in order to be saved.

Because Jesus warned that many people would come to him in the last day and say Lord Lord have we not prophesied in thy name, and in thy name have cast out devils, and in thy name done many wonderful works and then will I profess unto them - I never knew you, depart from me, ye that work iniquity.

Notice what those people are bringing up - oh we've done all these works - they think they're going to heaven because of their works.

But the Bible says salvation is not of works lest any man should boast - you've got to have your faith in Jesus, not in yourself, and so if you are hearing this message now and you believe that the Lord Jesus Christ died for all your sins, and rose again, and you believe that salvation is simply by trusting in his finished work on the cross and you're willing to put all of your faith and trust in him - I'm just going to lead you in a short prayer where you could pray this to God and ask to be saved right now and this is a one-time deal being born again is a one-time thing so I'm gonna lead you in this prayer – you can just repeat this after me

But make sure that you believe this and that you're saying this from your heart - Dear Jesus, I know that I'm a sinner, I know that I deserve to go to hell, but I believe that you died on the cross for all my sins, and rose again from the dead. Please save me right now, and give me eternal life. I'm only trusting you Jesus, Amen.

Now, if you prayed that prayer and you believe that, you are saved and you are saved forever.

And that is the best news, that anyone could ever tell you that's why the word gospel means good news that's great news and so now that you're saved, you have two choices : you can continue to live the way that the world is living, and you'll still be saved, you'll still go to heaven but you're going to constantly be running into God's discipline.

And you're not going to be blessed by God like you could or you can start going to a good baptist church, reading your bible, learning more, following God's commandments, you know, doing the things that God wants you to do, and then you're going to be blessed by God, and so thank you for listening to this message, God bless you, and have a wonderful day.